

Summary of Issues from 1st Round of Open Houses - Scoping

6/5/02 - 6/20/02

- **Access and Recreation:**
 - People want more non-motorized opportunities.
 - Want more places to go for solitude.
 - Damage to the resource by motorized activities vs. horses.
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 - There are “some areas” where non-motorized and motorized are compatible (ie. snowmobile/cross country skiing). Doesn’t have to be a conflict.
 - People want more motorized opportunities.
 - Older Americans concern about their need to drive because they can’t walk as far for personal use, huckleberry picking etc.
 - What about seasonal access?
 - Concern about roads and access for firewood cutting, recreation, hunting etc.
 - Study needs to be done on damage to the resource by ATV’s vs. horses and which has more impact as far as weed spread.
 - Review opening closed roads to provide for disabled etc. access.
 - Loss of access due to road obliteration.
 - Where’s the scientific data to support obliteration of roads?
 - Decommissioning roads are used to keep people out. Where does the decision come from?
 - Impacts on wildlife.
 - Concentration of people causes impacts to wildlife (ie. The number of recreationists at some high mountain lakes in the Selkirk Mtns. driving away the caribou.)
 - Who makes the decision on what roads/trail are closed? What is the process?

- What percentage of the people that are using the forest is based on increases in the population base and what percentage is based on technology?
 - Is technology the only reason for more impact, broader spread, and more intense impact on the land?
- Strong concern of closing off access to National Forest System lands. For example, by Forest Service definition, first a road that is open for road vehicles is closed and changed to a motorized trail excluding road vehicles and then sometimes it's closed to ATV's and open to motorcycles. Forest Service needs to explain why.
- **Best Science:**
 - Who determines the best science that is available and what will we use in revision?
 - ICBEMP – What's our plan to use the science from this project? Are we going to use the science from this Plan in its entirety?
 - Concerns about using CRB science.
 - Scientific studies are ambiguous (Grizzly bear, Lynx and UCRB)
 - Skeptical of the new science – What is new science?
- **Decision Making Process:**
 - How are decisions made and how do local interests weigh against national interests? Which takes priority in decision-making and how are they used in the decision-making process? This is not a voting process.
 - Not listening to locals and people are frustrated. Appearance of listening to out-of-staters, scientists, environmentalists etc.
 - Look more at local level for management strategies. Forest Plan will be made locally and decision-maker is local.
 - What kinds of decisions are going to be made in forest plan revision?
 - When will site-specific decision be made and will there be public involvement?
 - Who makes the decision on what roads/trails are closed? What is the process?

- How do people and communities fit into the equation in the revision effort?
Explain the balance of ecological and social and economic and which carries more weight.
 - Do resource issues/management take precedence over social issues/desires on any given area?
 - How does the Endangered Species Act affect decisions in forest plan revision?
- It's difficult to provide comments when I have site-specific issues/concerns when forest plan revision is broad in scope. How do I make comments about my special area during forest plan revision?
- **Ecosystem Health and Vegetation Management:**
 - More management of the ecosystems to make and keep them healthy but don't lock us out – utilize our tools – fire and logging/thinning.
 - Forests need to be thinned “properly” even where they've been logged. What's the hold-up on doing hands-on land management?
 - Need to get forests healthy and ready to log in future years.
 - Is tree planting occurring?
 - How are you going to replace the early seral tree species?
 - The health of the forest is the most important thing.
 - What standards apply to restoration? To who's standards or what standards will the forests be restored?
 - The Forest Service has no clue of historic conditions.
 - If we don't address forest health issues now and clean up the forests, we “will” have real water quality issues because of catastrophic fires and other reasons.
 - Difficulty in understanding the potassium deficiency issue and what does it mean to health of the vegetation.
- **Fire Risk:**
 - When are we going to address the Wildlands Fire Policy?
 - Reducing fire hazard/build-up needs to be addressed in forest plan revision.

- Fire risk is increasing so why can't we just estimate outputs related to reducing fire risk?
- Strong concern of the need to focus on fire because of the fuel build-up in the national forests.
- Use fire as a tool for land management, prescribed fire so we don't have these catastrophic fires.
- **Fisheries:**
 - How will the Endangered Species Act be dealt with in forest plan revision and how will it affect the decisions?
- **Forest Plan Process:**
 - Need information about the forest plan process.
 - Frustration with the process.
 - Amendments to the Forest Plan seem to happen every year.
 - Need to explain programmatic nature of Forest Plans vs. site-specific documents.
 - It's difficult to provide comments when I have site-specific issues/concerns when forest plan revision is broad in scope. How do I make comments about my special area during forest plan revision?
 - What happens if forest plan revision is appealed and/or litigated?
 - If the funding goes away for forest plan revision, what happens to the schedule?
 - Which Planning Rule are you going to use, 1982 or the 2002?
 - What happens if the new Planning Rule becomes final during our revision process? How does the decision-maker decide which planning regulations to use?
 - What will happen with the changes that happen between now and 2005? How will they affect the new revised forest plans?
 - Too much planning – planning to plan.
 - Analysis paralysis.

- Appeal process is so ambiguous. Concern about people who appeal forest management issues from out-of-state and don't know the area.
 - Why can anyone with their viewpoint, not necessarily substantiated, be able to stop or dictate how a project is done or appeal it, when the specialists are in the Forest Service? Let the professionals do their jobs.
 - Misuse and abuse of the appeals/litigation system – needs to revise the appeals process.
- The Chief said 40% of the Forest Service budget is being spent on planning and conflicting mandates. Analysis process is based on judges' decision.
- Accountability for our actions is a critical component to a new Forest Plan.
- How effective will the forest plan revision team be in covering such a big area, two forests?
- Appropriations not conducive to achieving all objectives, ie. aquatic restoration, weeds, etc.
- What happens if the 15 years expires and the revision is not completed?
- **Implementation and Monitoring:**
 - How does the FS ensure that we can implement and monitor the Forest Plan, financially? Will the Forest Service prioritize how and what we implement and use this based on the funding given by Congress?
- **Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs):**
 - How are IRAs going to be addressed in the new Forest Plans?
 - What happened to the IRA's proposed for wilderness in the 1987 Forest Plans and how are we going to address in the new Forest Plans?
 - What's the next step with IRAs that were analyzed and not recommended for wilderness?
 - What's the definition of an IRA and what's the difference from unroaded areas and roadless areas?

- Explain the different management options available in IRAs, unroaded etc.
- **Land Exchanges:**
 - How are we going to address in forest plan revision?
- **Laws and Policy:**
 - Which laws take precedence over other laws? The Forest Service has so many agencies/people telling them what to do and who or what law takes precedence?
 - Does the Forest Service really have to comply with all the laws mandated by US Fish and Wildlife Service?
 - Some of the laws that the Forest Service has to follow go against public viewpoints.
- **Noxious weeds:**
 - Weed program has been allowed to take backseat to timber management.
 - Noxious weeds have sky rocketed on federal lands.
 - Study needs to be done on damage to the resource by ATV's vs. horses. Which has more impact as far as weed spread?
- **Public Involvement and Public Comment:**
 - Forest Service needs to establish focus groups throughout the forest plan revision process.
 - We need to find common ground. What can we agree on?
 - Set up study groups for specific areas ie. Tobacco Valley area.
 - Suggestion and agreement amongst the audience for the Forest Service to bring divergent groups together to work together and come up with solutions to issues. Encourages the Forest Service to proactively make this happen.
 - How do we use public comment? Did you really listen to us? Look for a lot of ways to share with the public what the Forest Service heard.
 - Look for other ways to engage and reach the public. How does the FS get more people involved and interested?

- Different times for meetings and different methods of informing the public.
- Concern about the past public involvement with last Forest Plan and the result was not favorable. What will be different with this plan revision?
 - Does the Forest Service really want the public involved?
 - Want to see real public involvement.
- It's difficult to provide comments when I have site-specific issues/concerns when forest plan revision is broad in scope. How do I make comments about my special area during forest plan revision?
- The Forest Service needs to share comments from both sides of the issue.
- How much weight will public comment have in decisions in the Forest Plan?
- Show how all resources integrate with one another and affect one another.
- Did you have a meeting in Missoula because there is a lot of people from there that recreate on the IPNF?
- When is the best time for special interest groups to provide comment and suggest an alternative?
- **Social and Economics:**
 - Concerned about local economy and our affect/contribution to it. If the community is diversifying their economy.
 - What's the Forest Service contribution to economic sustainability?
 - What reference will you be starting from for economic sustainability– scratch or ICEBMP?
 - When mills close, this affects the whole community (schools, roads and tax base etc.)
 - Put the forests' Social Assessments on the website.
 - Update the Kootenai's Social Assessment to reflect current attitudes, conditions etc.
 - \What are the substantial resource and social changes that have occurred since 1987?

- More small sales in the forest plan. More helicopter sales to get wood to the mills.
- Emphasize and provide more details on Social and Economics in the new Forest Plans.
- **Timber Production:**
 - What was the biggest obstacle to us achieving the direction that we came out with in the 1987 forest plans (ie. Timber production, ASQ)?
 - Why haven't we ever met the ASQ target and the other targets in the 1987 Forest Plans?
 - Guarantee for more timber outputs for stability of mills.
 - Plum Creek mill in Libby could close, creating a loss of 330 jobs.
 - Look hard at timber production predictions in new forest plans and explain what you mean by the numbers.
 - More small sales in the Forest Plan. More helicopter sales to get wood to the mills.
 - Look at timber heritage in forest plan revision.
 - Utilize 10 – 14" trees. What's the market for these small trees?
 - Timber production helps reduce fire buildup/hazard. Why not use it as a tool for land management and it will also help sustain the economy of the communities?
 - Where do the funds go that come from timber sales?
 - We are getting more and more timber from Canada.
- **Water Quality:**
 - What is Pacfish and how does it affect forest plan revision?
 - What qualifies a stream to be impaired and who sets the standard?
 - What causes a stream to be impaired?
- **Wildlife:**
 - How will the Grizzly Bear amendment be affected by forest plan revision? How will the amendment affect decisions in the new Forest Plans?
 - How will the Endangered Species Act affect decisions in the new Forest Plans?

- How are we going to address wildlife corridors in forest plan revision?
How does the Grizzly, Lynx etc. amendments affect these wildlife corridors?
- How many bears can this forest support?
- Concerned about the effect of science on grizzly and lynx and its affect on decision in the new Forest Plans.
- Impacts on wildlife.
 - Concentration of people causes impacts to wildlife (ie. the number of recreationists at some high mountain lakes in the Selkirk Mtns. driving away the caribou.)
- Regarding the Endangered Species Act, are the programs coordinated so that there isn't conflict between species for certain chunks of land?